

## Contributions

### FOREIGN MISSIONS

J. L. GILLIN

The agitation among us on the question of missions the past few years has not been fruitless. No one will deny that a great many of our brethren believe in missions now who did not a few years ago. And it cannot be denied that those who have pushed the missionary cause among us have been possessed of zeal. So it is no longer a question as to the desirability of missions. The question now is when and where. We have not been making haste slowly and consequently we have to look back upon a record of more zeal than wisdom. We are now being urged to launch into the foreign field. We are told that the fact that our home missions are not adequately supported is no reason why we should delay. But it is my earnest conviction that if a call is not made to the sober sense of the church that another blunder will be made by launching foreign missions before we are adequately equipped to carry out what we undertake. It is an easy matter to excite a crowd to promise to give largely to a new project. Witness, the pledges given at the launching of the Chicago mission a few years ago, some of which pledges stand unpaid today. But it is not so easy to keep up for a series of years the support necessary to sustain that project born amid the excitement of a day. Some people call all such excitement the effect of the Holy Spirit and by so doing dishonor Him. Action and reaction are equal and in opposite directions is a law of spirit as well as of nature. And the Pennsylvania State conference of a few years ago when such wonderful excitement took possession of it is an instance of its truth. Men and women promised things they could not fulfil and had sober sense prevailed they might have known they could not even while they promised it. Chicago mission was born an abortive, out of due time, before we were ready for it and the church has not yet ceased to feel the reaction of that abnormal excitement which brought it to birth. But it has been born and now it must be fed and clothed and nursed into strong and vigorous manhood. And there is the rub.

O, brethren, let us take warning what not to do in regard to the foreign mission question. It is well that our people should be educated on the subject. For only thus shall they be prepared to support a foreign mission once it is launched. But for God's sake and for the sake of the cause among us let us not plunge into that field half prepared. It is nothing short of sinful for us to send men and women into places to work for Christ and the church when we know in all human probability we cannot secure the support necessary to carry on the work without disgracefully pinching them and causing them to beg thru the columns of our church paper, or like the Levites of old, forsake

their altars to go out to secure the necessary funds for support.

The Foreign Mission Society organized last year is very good, provided it confines itself to agitation and education among our people and to the raising of a fund with which to carry on the work when it shall have been begun. But if it shall be the means or occasion of pushing the Brethren church into the foreign field without the previous counting of the cost, without the solid, sober conviction of the churches that they must support the work, a blunder will be committed the results of which will bar the future work in that direction for years.

In all such things we cannot base a work on what the members of our churches *ought* to do, but on what they *will* do.

Personally, I do not believe our churches are ready for the launching of Foreign Missions. They have too much on their hands now. The local work in our districts is not being pushed as it ought, largely because all surplus money is drained into our national missions. And our national missions are begging.

Let us give our attention to these local and national needs for a few more years, meanwhile agitating the great Foreign Field. Then once our home missions are adequately supported and the conscience of the church is aroused on the subject of Foreign Missions we shall be able to push out in that direction backed not only with sentiment but with money to sustain what we begin.

I pray for a baptism of wisdom upon our church, and that means a baptism of the Holy Spirit.

### FEETWASHING

I. D. BOWMAN

"So after he had washed their feet," "he said unto them," "ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well: for so I am. If I then your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily," "the servant is not greater than his lord. If ye know these things happy are ye if ye do them." John 13:12-17.

One time there was an old man who was frequently lost in the forests of Michigan. His neighbors tired of hunting him, gave him a compass so that he could know what direction he was traveling. Soon he was lost again. When his neighbors found him he said, "I could not get my compass to point North. It kept shaking and shaking and then would point South East in spite of all that I could do." The fault was not with the compass but with the man. It did not point to suit him. So with footwashing. The Word is right, but it don't point to suit the selfishness and pride of the church.

#### I. The Plain Literal Teaching of the Word.

1. The precept and example of Christ put us under obligation to wash feet. "Ye

also ought to wash one another's feet. For (because) I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you." "Christ leaving us an example that we should follow his steps." John 13:14, 15; 1 Peter 2:21.

2. It is a plain command. "Ye also ought (ophilo-bound) to wash one another's feet. 'Ye should do as I have done to you.'" The Greek word for ought (ophilo) is one of the strongest in the Greek language. "To owe," "To be indebted," "To be under obligation, duty or necessity"—Donnegan. Webster says that "should" has all the force of "shall."

When Peter refused to obey, he was told that it would separate him from Christ. "Thou shalt never wash my feet." "If I wash thee not thou hast no part with me"—John 13:8. The same may be said of us if we refuse this command of Christ.

4. Those who refuse to wash feet make themselves greater than Christ. "The servant is not greater than his Lord. If I then your Lord and Master have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet." John 13:14, 16.

5. Christ promised happiness for obeying this command. "If ye know these things (footwashing was one of them) happy are ye if ye do them." John 13:17. The carnal man cannot discern the things of the Spirit, hence turns from footwashing in disgust, while the spiritual obey it with great delight.

6. The disciples obeyed this commandment, because years after Christ gave it, Paul made it a test of Christian obedience. Timothy was forbidden to grant certain blessings to a widow if she refused to obey this command. He said receive her "if she have washed the saint's feet." A clear proof that it was observed by faithful disciples. 1 Tim. 5:10.

#### II. Spiritual Signification.

It primarily represents love. "Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them to the end" "He began to wash the disciples feet." "A new commandment I give unto you that ye love one another as I have loved you." John 13:2, 5, 34. It represents New Testament love.

2. It signifies Sanctification. "He that is washed (lumenos—baptized—washed by dipping the whole body) needeth not save (only) to wash (nipsasthai—to wash by applying the water—to cleanse) his feet but is clean every whit." John 13:10. Here two different Greek words are used—one wash by dipping; the other cleanse by rubbing. Hence the word applied to footwashing represents spiritual cleansing—sanctification. Bingham speaking of the church at Milan about A. D. 400 says, that footwashing "was not merely a business of humility, but of mystery and sanctification."

3. It represents the gospel doctrine of servitude. Christ came to serve and gave this ordinance to constantly teach us that we must be servants one of another. History shows that footwashing was rejected when